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LEAGUE FOR A REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS PARTY

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VOLUNTARY LABOR

F O R E W O R D

Two recent events within the movement for a new International make the appearance of this pamphlet more timely than ever. The expulsion and split of the "Left-wing" in the Workers Party, USA, and the splits within the Revolutionary Socialist Workers Party of Holland (RSAP) are both based upon the revolt of substantial sections of two Trotskyist organizations against policies laid down by the international leadership and accepted by the official leaders of the American and the Dutch groups. In America, the fight centered around the "French turn", the sending of the Trotsky group in France into the Socialist Party, and the attempt of Cannon to head the Workers Party toward fusion with the Socialist Party here. In Holland, the issue was the fight carried on by Trotsky since the middle of 1933 against the International Bureau for Revolutionary Socialist Unity (also referred to as London Bureau, Amsterdam Bureau, formerly IAG), culminating in a vicious attack upon the Socialist Workers Party of Germany (SAP) by Trotsky, followed almost immediately by the publication of an "Open Letter of 5" which calls for immediate steps for the formation of a new International. The RSAP Youth (RSJV) under Molenaar and a section of the adults including J. Bladergroen fought the policy of the leadership which was directed toward a break with the London Bureau and the immediate launching of a 4th International as a paper organization, composed exclusively of the elements close to Trotsky.

Neither of these splits gives evidence of a thorough analysis of Trotsky's policies and methods as a whole, and their published statements are singularly narrow and limited in outlook, to the immediate issue upon which their internal fight was based. It is significant that in both cases, too, the fight turned around international questions, without attempting to fight for a revolutionary program or to find a connection between the policies in the international field which they opposed and the policies and methods of the leaderships, national and international, in questions of organization, trade union policy, mass activity. We believe it is necessary in the interests of the revolutionary movement to broaden and deepen the analysis of the policies and methods of Trotsky and the organizations which follow him, in order to understand the reasons for their bankruptcy today. This is all the more necessary because it will clear the road for the revolutionary movement to absorb and assimilate Trotsky's valuable contributions to Marxism which include the theory of permanent revolution, the analysis of the Soviet bureaucracy, and the analysis of the pre-Hitlerite crisis in Germany, 1930-1933.

We pointed out as far back as June, 1934, before the "French turn", in the first issue of "Labor Front", our criticism of Trotsky's organizational weakness, which became a factor of overshadowing importance in a period when the central task is precisely the organization of a new international revolutionary party.

The conflict between Trotsky and the SAP is of exceptional importance because it raises a fundamental issue between two utterly divergent political conceptions as to how a revolutionary organization should be built and function.

The essential issue, in our opinion, in this controversy is the relation of the vanguard to the mass of the proletariat. Trotsky's conception is that of a propagandist group, primarily concerned with spreading a certain number of correct ideas among the advanced workers, and not vitally concerned with the question of directly influencing masses of workers including the backward and even the react-

ionary ones. From this standpoint, the question of organizational form and of mass activity remain secondary. The party is conceived of as a purely subjective force, diffusing Marxist ideology throughout the working class.

The approach of the SAP is quite different. They start with the immediate needs and demands of the masses of workers, and are concerned with policies which will build a road between these immediate demands and the ultimate revolutionary goal, the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a classless society. With this approach, they lay themselves open to many dangers; excessive faith in spontaneity, the risk of opportunistic overemphasis on immediate demands and popular slogans, tailendism toward the masses, vacillations on theoretical and principle questions, a willingness to sacrifice clarity for the sake of unity in organization and in action. As a vanguard, they lack a clear-cut revolutionary program.

And it is true that they have fallen into many of these mistakes on a whole series of questions; insufficiently firm positions against the reformist Norwegian Labor Party (NAP), a vacillating position on the Soviet Union, a shamefully weak and conciliatory estimation of the Communist International after its 7th Congress.

The SAP reveals itself as a battleground of centrist and revolutionary tendencies, rather than a firm homogeneous communist party. Nevertheless, we believe that on the essentials of their differences with Trotsky, they are correct, and that it is more important for the revolutionary movement to win an organization of 4 or 5000 militants evolving toward the left politically and carrying on a strenuous illegal fight against Hitler, than to confine itself to the criticisms of a sectarian idealistic organization which may appear right a hundred times over, but is completely incapable of influencing the objective development of the class struggle.

The highly embittered relations between Trotsky and the SAP have resulted in Trotsky's posing the alternative "with me or with the SAP". This reflects the criminal sectarianism and impatience which results from the fundamentally wrong organizational approach criticized in this pamphlet. Trotsky's polemic has had to base itself on a whole series of distortions and untruths to which this is an answer. It not only contributed nothing toward laying the foundations of the new International, but definitely attempted to bar from it an organization which can help substantially in the building of it.

The analysis of the subjective idealism of Trotsky constitutes a distinct contribution by the SAP. It explains how Trotsky could be so often politically correct and organizationally impotent; how the same man could advocate the theory of permanent revolution and at the same time, conciliation with the Mensheviks (1906-1912 and even later); why he failed to see the principled nature of Lenin's break with the Mensheviks in 1903 on the question of who shall be a member of the party; why he thought it unnecessary to build up a faction within the Russian Communist Party to give an organizational form to his struggle against the Stalinist bureaucracy; why his organizational strength within the party was exceeded not only by Stalin, but even by Zinoviev and Kamenoff; why he was unable to approach the question of preparing to build a party after his expulsion in 1927, and particularly after he came to realize the impossibility of reforming Stalinism after 1933, and his vacillations since that time. The whole sorry story of the "Bolshevik-Leninists" and their 27 splits, to which must now be added those in USA and Holland, the desperate maneuver of the "French turn" and the equally desperate adventure of the paper 4th International, the only kind that can result from the

program of "immediate launching", and of fighting the mobilization of forces whether through "Zimmerwald" conferences or the London Bureau - all these questions are not isolated, and can be understood only in connection with each other.

Our own position as to the building of a new International has been made clear in the first issue of the "New International Bulletin", to which we refer.

We regard the SAP, therefore, as one of the potential forces for the new International. Our criticism of their general position and particularly of the present pamphlet, is intended to be of a comradely character directed towards strengthening the revolutionary tendencies within the party. As the Brandlerite minority said on entering the SAP: "We know - and we consider it our duty to say this openly ... that the SAP today does not yet possess the clarity and homogeneity which it needs to fulfill its great task. Within its ranks the struggle is still going on for the correct road to its goal. The SAP still shows the marks of its origin. Reformist, and bourgeois-pacifist views within it have not yet been overcome. The various tendencies, among them anti-soviet and ultra-left ones, are struggling for influence. We will not for a moment minimize the dangers connected with it."

The SAP still uses phraseology from time to time about the "necessary reform of the CI", the "rebirth of the labor movement", "the restoration to health of the Communist Party", which clashes with its fundamental position for a new revolutionary International. When it reportedly dismisses the slogan of the 4th International as a "fetish", it leaves the way open to great ambiguity. Do they mean that the formulation "4th International" must be avoided because it has so-to-speak been trade-marked by Trotsky? Or do they think it is good politics to refrain from posing the question of the new International sharply in order to avoid antagonizing reformist and centrist elements? The former position is quite understandable; the latter, of which they are accused by Trotsky should be refuted by a clean-cut position as to the bankruptcy of the 2nd and 3rd Internationals and the necessity of a new revolutionary International. Whether called the 4th or not, it will be probably the 4th in any case. And certainly we hope the SAP does not share Trotsky's position that the question of organization form is secondary, mere "bookkeeping".

The criticism of Stalinist policy is at times very ambiguous in this document and others, and not sharply enough demarcated from the position of Brandler-Lovestonite. When the "New Front", (official organ of the SAP), in a recent issue speaks of the mistakes "which date at least from 1928", when in this pamphlet they indulge in an elaborate defense of the 1923 policy in Germany of Stalin-Brandler, although admitting the mistakes of the Anglo-Russian Committee and the Chinese policy, we believe it is necessary, particularly at this time to point out that Stalinism has once before gone through an ultra-right opportunistic phase in 1923-1929. Especially now, is it necessary to point this out for the benefit of Lovestonite and Brandlerite critics from the right who now find themselves in the uncomfortable position of being compelled to fire from the left.

The argument that 1923 was not a period of revolutionary crisis because if it were, there would have been spontaneous outbreaks which no mistakes of a few leaders could have stopped, seems altogether false in the light of the experience of 1933 when Hitler came into power. For a shifting of class forces such as the victory of fascism, is no less desperate a measure on the part of the bourgeoisie than the larger scale adventure of war, and both cannot exist at the same time with a period of social peace. The argument that the real trouble with the German policy of

1923 was that it was "too submissive to Moscow" is another hangover of the past like all these superficial indictments of the Stalinist regime because of its "lack of democracy". The reason why the German CP "submitted to Moscow" was the same as the reason "Moscow" failed to give them correct directives; the CI and its sections had entered on the road leading toward national socialism and away from revolutionary internationalism.

The overestimation of spontaneity in the pamphleteer's analysis of 1923 in Germany is expressed in such formulations as "the relation of the proletariat to socialism arises out of its daily life, the mechanical view which Lenin fought that socialism arises out of the class struggle itself as against the Economists in "What is to be Done?"

The SAP position on centrism is quite ambiguous, and will be dealt with in a separate discussion. The position on war is not a fully clarified revolutionary platform, and needs amplification in regard to demarcation from liberal and pacifist illusions. At the same time, they draw a healthy distinction between peace slogans directed to the masses with a view to drawing them into revolutionary action and the empty pacifist appeals directed to the bourgeois state.

Most unsatisfactory of all, perhaps, is the statement of the relation to the NLP, the attempts to "strengthen the forces which aim to transform the NLP into a revolutionary party", etc. This policy would justify Trotsky's "French turn". What revolutionists could expect would be not to "transform" or "capture" a reformist party but to work for the clarification and differentiation of the revolutionary elements within such a party. This process may be accelerated by the activity of a revolutionary fraction within a reformist party, but this revolutionary fraction must be under the discipline of an independent organization which is politically free to express its full position without being bound by the passing tactical necessities of a fraction. That is why we regard the independence of the revolutionary organization which Trotsky once posed as a principle of the new International and later rejected in favor of the "French turn", as still a basic principle of revolutionary organization.

In recent articles in the "Neue Front", the position on the participation of proletarian parties in a government coalition shows an unwholesome tendency to revise Lenin's teaching on the state, in spite of all efforts to show how the strategic posts of the state apparatus can be used for revolutionary purposes. The position of Lenin toward the Menshevik coalition in 1917, toleration on condition of their breaking with the liberal bourgeoisie, does not need revision in the light of subsequent events.

The SAP, with many stumblings and vacillations has been developing toward the left. In the conflict of revolutionary and centrist as well as reformist tendencies within it, the party is beginning to take a position on a series of essential questions, in which the revolutionary tendencies appear to be making progress. We are in full sympathy with the fundamental position that revolutionary policy can be developed only in immediate connection with the movement of the masses. We greet the further revolutionary development of the SAP, in spite of all the necessary criticisms and differences, as a step forward on the road that we are traveling to a new revolutionary party.

LONG LIVE THE INTERNATIONAL REVOLUTION !
LONG LIVE THE NEW INTERNATIONAL !

A NECESSARY DISCUSSION

(Issued by the Foreign Bureau of the Socialist Workers Party of Germany (SAP))

INTRODUCTION

Our period makes unusually high demands of the conscious revolutionists. In the midst of objective conditions which press for a socialist solution, the proletarian movement has shown itself unable to carry through that re-armament which the course of development demands.

The task of the necessary regeneration of the labor movement is recognized today by only a small minority. This vanguard again is itself exceptionally heterogeneous. No wonder, since its various parts have come from various directions to the same result, and none of these groups is already today in possession of "one hundred percent truth". Seeking, groping, mistakes, are inevitable in a period of profound disintegration and regroupment. It cannot be otherwise, since parties and groups too, do not come to the right road by reading books, but through long painful experience and confrontation with reality. True, they have a compass in the method of Marxism but this, too, has been choked in the hands of the bureaucrats, for, according to a profound saying of Lenin, Marxism can maintain and develop itself only in connection with a developing mass movement. Unconditional sincerity, serious self-criticism, are the tasks of the vanguard now more than ever.

The homogeneity of the individual groups, their real fusion into common organization, can result in the final analysis, not from abstract debates but only from action and experience. The groups which constitute the "vanguard" today have, for the greater part, developed as critical oppositions to a policy which others were making. Therefore, they assumed a strongly critical and ideological character. But now they have to make policies themselves, must be concrete and active. This is not easy. But only in active politics can the real essence of an organization be revealed. Therefore, we can and must not judge a group according to whether it comes out in solemn proclamations for a new International, but must recognize the concrete proposals which stand behind the proclamations and their connection; their actions, their internal structure and measure these by the objective possibilities. Only a discussion which accepts all this can be fruitful; it will then also be carried on in that loyal tone and in that comradely manner which critics who are for the same cause, must assume.

Unfortunately, Trotskyism in its policies and polemics, starts with different premises and is guided by different methods. For us, as well as for it, it has been proved that abstract agreement as to goal is not enough for a close alliance in struggle. The result without the road to it, a goal without the strategy for it, are completely abstract quantities. But in every strategic question the same differences between us and Trotskyism arise. If labels are to be given any meaning, we would describe Trotskyism as "idealistic subjectivism", which lets itself be guided by its wishes rather than by reality, which bears that feature of the sects that Marx described in the following words: "The sects seek their justification in their point d'honneur, not in that which unites them with the class movement, but in the special shibboleth which distinguishes them from it".

Trotsky's method and theory is strikingly characterized by a saying of Engels: It is not one "to which the workers are to work themselves up out of their own class feeling, but one which they have to swallow as an article of faith, at once and without development".

From this attitude result opportunistic impatience and absolutely unhealthy organizational structure, constant splits, a bad social composition of the organization. And all this makes Trotskyism, in spite of many correct, fundamental ideas, a disorganizing force in the labor movement. We, on the other hand, are in Trotsky's eyes, centrists, renegades, obstacles. We will not deny him the right to criticize us. But the manner of his criticism is a mockery of loyalty and truthfulness. But such "sensitiveness" for truth and loyalty is for Trotskyism, itself a sign of centrism. That makes it hard for people to understand each other....

Much as we are in solidarity with Trotsky in view of the persecution carried on against him by the bourgeoisie, the reformists, and the Stalinists; much as we recognize his great services as revolutionist and publicist, just so much are we still obliged to condemn and attack his political methods. We regret that this has become unavoidably necessary. The renovation of the labor movement in the whole world, and especially in Germany, would be easier to carry through had not Trotskyism shown itself to be a thoroughly negative force for this task.

For those sections of the vanguard which have been permeated by Trotsky with an absolutely poisonous atmosphere of criticism, and know us only by caricature, the following pages are destined. In the immediate, they represent an answer to the polemics of Trotsky in "Unser Wort" No. 5, (pg. 57, "New International", August, 1935), "Centrist Alchemy or Marxism". At the same time, however, they represent more than a mere polemic for day-to-day use; they attempt to present the general views of the SAP on certain important problems. They reject tricks of style and endeavor with the greatest brevity to say "that which is".

"WITH BANNER FURLED"

The Socialist Workers Party of Germany (SAP) arose in 1931 from a split in the Socialist Party of Germany (SPG).

Those who came from the SPG, mostly young workers, were joined by a number of small groups. At its peak, the party numbered 25,000 members (against 300,000 for the Communist Party of Germany (CPG) and 1,000,000 for the SPG), and contained elements which were bound together only by the necessity of a united front policy, but were often far apart on principle questions. In 1932, the minority of the CPG opposition entered the SAP in order to win the party to communism. This group, made up almost entirely of veteran members of the CPG, led by comrades who had already participated in a leading role in the Spartakusbund, in the foundation of the CPG and in the early years of its development, started from the recognition of the fact that the possibilities of a return to health of the CPG, led by nationally limited Stalinist bureaucrats, had almost entirely disappeared and that it was necessary to lay the foundations of a new communist party (while the Trotskyists believed in the possibility of reform of the CPG until the victory of Hitler and even afterwards).

Trotsky accused and even today still accuses these comrades of having entered the SAP with "furling banner". In order to meet this slander and also to show how the situation at that time was judged by these comrades, we quote in the following paragraphs the most important parts of the long statement with which this group entered the SAP and which was published in the central organ of the SAP, the "Sozialistische Arbeiter-Zeitung" of March 13, 1932:

"STATEMENT OF ENTRY OF THE CPO MINORITY"

"...What a terrifying loss of will power, of consciousness of strength, of force, the proletariat has suffered since those revolutionary struggles of 1918-1919, in which it stretched out its hand for political power! What are the reasons for this decline?

"First of all, the responsibility rests on the infamous policies of the Social-Democratic leadership which, indissolubly bound up with the bourgeois state, from fear of the revolution, sacrificed the class interests of the proletariat over and over again, betrayed socialism, confused, split and paralyzed the working-class, handed over one strategic position after another to the bourgeoisie, and now wants to make the mass organizations of the proletariat itself into supports of the capitalist dictatorship against the proletariat.

"The revolt of tens of thousands of class conscious workers against the policies of reformism, and their break from the SPG, was, after a long time, again a promising sign of the return to health of the labor movement in Germany.

"But did this revolt have to lead to the organization of a new party? Must not reformism, in view of its bankruptcy, have long ago lost its influence within the working class?...

"Unquestionably, the workers would long ago have moved in swarms from the camp of Social-Democracy into that of Communism if the Communist Party of Germany and the Communist International had not repelled these masses by their policies. The bankruptcy of democracy, the collapse of parliamentarism, had proved the correctness of the principles of communism. Besides, the building of socialism in the Soviet Union is a tremendous asset for communism. But the attractive force which should have sprung from these facts, was destroyed by their ultra-left policies, which split the trade-unions and the other proletarian mass organizations, prevented the united front of all workers, and finally, have got lost in a dangerous petty bourgeois nationalism.

"The rule of the bureaucracy in the CPG with its unMarxist leader-worship, the complete suppression of criticism, the strangling of all political initiative and the refusal to train revolutionists, conscious of their responsibilities, has made the return to real communist policy impossible to this day.

"It has discredited communism and has thereby repelled the critical elements among the working-class.

"So today, in the most revolutionary situation, objectively, since 1918, with more than 6,000,000 unemployed, in spite of growth of membership, and increasing number of votes, the CPG is terrifyingly impotent. The proletarian mass organizations, especially in the trade unions, which are the lever for the release of decisive mass action, the CPG is practically devoid of all influence. Its policies prevent the welding together of the working class and thereby weaken their resistance to fascism...

"In view of this situation, we see in the SAP a factor in Germany which can contribute in decisive measure to bring the working class out of its disintegration, its confusion and its impotence.

"We know - and we consider it our duty to say this openly to our new party comrades - that the SAP today does not yet possess the clarity and homogeneity which it needs to fulfill its great task. Within its ranks, the struggle is still going on for the correct road to its goal. The SAP still shows the marks of its origin. Reformist, and bourgeois - pacifist views within it have not yet been overcome. The various tendencies, among them anti-soviet and ultra-left ones, are struggling for influence. We will not for a moment minimize the dangers connected with it.

"But the development of the SAP has already shown how senseless was the statement of the present leadership of the CPG Opposition, dictated by dogmatic blindness, that the new party has 'in the last analysis, counter-revolutionary effects'. Its membership was, from the beginning, permeated with the will for a revolutionary party. Important steps to overcome reformist views have been made.

"The SAP is even today already an important factor for the creation of the proletarian united front. It has invigorated and strengthened the will of the working class for common resistance.

"To further this development with all our powers was our aim from the time the SAP was founded. Now we want to serve this aim within its ranks.

"We are communists. The principles of communism as established in the decisions of the first three Congresses of the Communist International and the fundamental rules of tactics which Lenin gave us will guide us in the future too. We give up no part of them.

"Many of us have struggled together with Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht. All of us are disciples of Luxemburg and Lenin, whose legacy was and will remain our guiding line in political activity. Deeply convinced of the correctness and victory of the principles of communism, we want to work in comradely collaboration with our new party comrades to the end that these principles will permeate all the policies of the SAP and thereby become fruitful for the entire working class.

"If it is the task of the SAP to win over the hundreds of thousands of Social-Democratic members and the millions of Social-Democratic supporters for a revolutionary policy, its most important goal must be to collaborate in the creation of the unified communist party.

"The persistent endeavor, unaffected by any disappointment, to come to common action with the CPG and its local organizations, and above all, a conscious Leninist policy of the SAP will open the road to this goal. This will also lead to the necessary reform of the Communist International, which is an indispensable condition for the fighting ability of the international labor movement.

"These are the aims for which we will stand within the SAP and which we now confidently and without reservations lay before the party members of the SAP. They will find in us fellow fighters who defend their standpoint firmly in questions of conviction and at the same time maintain loyal comradeship...."

We ask the reader to compare this statement with the statement of entry of the Belgian Trotskyists in the POB - carried out by giving up their own organization and relinquishing functioning as a fraction at the special request of Trotsky and at the cost of splitting his organization. It is reprinted in the French "Verite" of May 10, 1935. The decisive passages read:

"What must be the position of revolutionists?

"They must understand that in Belgium the organized labor movement carries the name of 'socialist', that it is the Belgian Labor Party (POB) and its great trade union centers, must understand that the Belgian bourgeoisie, in order to maintain its rule, is led to destroy the labor organizations, that is, the POB.

"Finally, they must understand that in order to carry out their progressive, active, revolutionary tasks, they must struggle actively within the mass organizations which must be set into motion, in order to prevent what happened in Germany Austria, and Spain... In Belgium, where the POB has the decisive influence, the best way to realize the real united front is to enter into the POB, (this was after the entry of the POB into the Government, after the strangling of the 'Plan' movement !!), in order to defend within it an active policy of struggle for the immediate and general interests of the working class ... Our entry into the POB leads to shutting down our paper, but means no repudiation of our ideas. It is determined solely and alone by the seriousness of the situation which makes it our task, which stands before all conscious elements of the working class, to take up without delay its position of struggle within the ranks of the organized working class."

We point further to a significant paragraph from one of the fundamental articles on which the French Trotskyists based their entry into the SFIO. They state there:

"The fate of the proletariat in our period depends to a very great extent on how decisively Social-Democracy is able to break with the bourgeois state in the short period left to it by the course of developments".

Now let the reader judge the question of "furling the banner" ! The CPO minority did not enter a party of the type of the POB, but into one just founded, in which young Socialists were struggling seriously and devotedly for the creation of a truly revolutionary party. In alliance with these forces, the CPO minority succeeded in winning the party, after having already previously drawn up the declaration of principles of the party. After the capitulation of the previous leaders of the party, who had become the minority, the illegal party convention of March, 1933, placed itself on the platform of communist policy and elected a communist leadership. The SAP called upon the class-conscious workers to build a new communist party and emphasized its willingness:

"Together with opposition groups in the SPG and the CPG, from the YPSL and the YCL, from sport and trade union organizations having the same purposes, and so far as possible, hand in hand with the Left Opposition and the CPO, to prepare and carry through the reconstruction of the German labor movement".

Since then the SAP has been working against fascism under the most difficult illegal conditions with very slight financial means under the hard blows of the Gestapo (Secret Police). But unfortunately, this work does not interest our critics because real work against Fascism obviously is of very little interest to them altogether.....

FOR A NEW INTERNATIONAL

"It is not a question of only proclaiming the final goal to the proletariat, but of increasing the activity in practical struggle, which alone is able to lead the proletariat to struggle for the final goal". (Theses of 3rd World Congress of the CI)

At the beginning of June, 1933, an illegal plenum of the SAP passed the following resolutions, from which we quote the following paragraphs:

"The German proletariat would not have suffered the terrible defeat of 1933 if there had been in Germany a Communist Party which gathered the masses of the proletariat behind it on the basis of Marxism and Leninism and led it to struggle. That in the decisive stage of the conflict there was no such Communist Party and that there is none to this day, is to be explained, not by accidental and subordinate mistakes of individual leaders or by individual organizational shortcomings, but by the fundamental mistakes in organization and tactics of the CI and the CPG, which for years and years we have expounded over and over again. (Rejection of the United Front, red trade union policy, national bolshevism, theory of socialism in one country, destruction of inner-party democracy). In March, 1933, an historical test proved what had been clear to us long before: that the CPG has become unable to fulfill its historic tasks and that this situation cannot be changed within the present CI system.

"From the recognition of these facts, which have only been touched on here, arises the necessity of working in a persistent, conscious manner over a long period of time for a thorough-going renovation of the labor movement in Germany and on an international scale. The SAP is prepared to enter into common struggle with all fighting groups of the German as well as the international proletariat who are working in the same direction in order to reach this great goal; the intensity of the collaboration will have to be guided by the degree of agreement reached in the most important questions. The clarity of principles or of tactics must not suffer from the will to unity of all revolutionary forces.

"The aim of this work is to create a real Communist Party in Germany and a real Communist International throughout the world. In the event that a change in the policies of the CI should result from inter-party regroupment in the Soviet Union or under the pressure of our work or for other reasons, we would naturally have to take a position toward these new facts and orientate our further tactics accordingly. Under the present given conditions and on the basis of the experiences of the past decade, however, it would be fatal to proclaim the reform of the CI and of the CPG as the direction of our work. Our aim remains the creation of a real Communist International; in what detailed forms this aim can be reached, the process of development of the next few years will decide."

Before this, the Dutch OSP (Independent Socialist Party), had expressed itself in the sense of a new revolutionary International.

But how did the Trotskyites stand?

Today they spread the statement that after the German defeat "without a moment's delay", they declared themselves for the 4th International (most recently in "Encore une fois; ou va la France?"). Let us see.

In the middle of March, 1933, there appeared in the emigration for the first time, "Unser Wort", the paper of the Trotskyites, with a programmatic statement from which we take the following sentences:

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"The International Left Opposition regards itself as a fraction of the Comintern, as the individual national sections are fractions of the national Communist Party. It sets itself the goal of bringing the CI back to the foundations of Marx and Lenin. That such a policy, under the given conditions is the only correct one, is proven by theoretical analysis as well as by historical experience."

"Although the special conditions of Russia led Bolshevism to a final break with Menshevism as early as 1912, the Bolshevik Party remained in the Second International until the end of 1914. The lessons of the World War were necessary in order to raise the question of a new International; the October revolution was necessary in order to call the new International into being."

In April came the first turn, in an article by Trotsky. Here for the first time, a new communist party for Germany is declared necessary:

"It would naturally be senseless to believe that the development in Germany will follow the Italian road, that Hitler will strengthen his rule without serious resistance step by step, that long years of rule stand before German fascism..."

"Stalinism in Germany has gone through its August 4th. The verdict has been passed on the official Communist Party. It will now fall apart, disintegrate sink into nothing. No artificial means will save it."

Trotsky is, therefore, against a new International and in the May issue of 'Unser Wort' (No.4), he bases this position on the following arguments:

"While in Germany, the official Communist Party has been politically liquidated, in the other countries and above all, in the USSR, it has not yet been subjected to a decisive test... Before the judgment of history, as well as before ordinary bourgeois justice, the defendant is, as a rule, not the one who carries the responsibility in principle, but the one who is caught.... The course of development in this way gives the other sections still time to think it over. We, the Left Opposition, are only the interpreters of the course of development. Therefore, we do not break with the 3rd International. But if the Stalinist bureaucracy brings the USSR to collapse, then we will have to build a Fourth International."

This quotation is remarkable in every respect. The new International can only be ready to speak of after decisive tests of the other sections and only after the collapse of the USSR. In precise contrast to his later distribution of roles, the author assigns to his organization the role of a simple spectator and interpreter of historical development. Later, because it suits him better then, he turns the weapon around and accuses us, the SAP, of precisely that role of spectator of the "historical process" which we never assumed, but which he assigned to his organization:

Let us go further: three months later in August ("U.W." No. 11) Trotsky comes out for a new International. On what does he base his turn? Has the USSR landed in the abyss? Have at least the above-mentioned great historical tests been gone through by the sections of the CI? Not at all! The resolutions of the Plenum of the Executive Committee of the CI on the situation in Germany, the mute acquiescence of all the sections in this resolution, the anti-fascist congress in Paris, the fate of the CP of Austria are for him "an irrefutable evidence of the fact that not only was the fate of the CPG sealed in Germany, but also that of the CI in its entirety".

It is difficult to "base" a new turn with greater casualness! A new Muenzenbergiade, a false resolution, these are the "great historical experiences!"

But: is the fate of the CI really sealed in its entirety? No! because it is expressly set forth as a task to regenerate the Bolshevik Party in the USSR:

"Just as the USSR cannot arrive at Socialism without the proletarian revolution in the west, so the Bolshevik-Leninists cannot restore to health the Bolshevik Party through their own forces alone without the rebirth of a real proletarian International".

In October, finally, ("UW" No. 13), Trotsky comes out for a new party in the USSR also and considers civil war against Stalin as hardly avoidable.

Naturally, nothing essential changed in the USSR from August to October and even before, in the previous two months, the other Comintern sections went through no decisive tests. The only thing that changed was Trotsky's thoughts, but instead of honestly revising himself, he writes cabalistic formulas - and the international organization must each time listen to its master's voice and change its orientation. But later on, in contradiction to the truth, ("to speak out that which is"), they declare they recognized the necessity for a new International immediately, without delay, after Hitler's victory - but those who spoke out in favor of a new International even before Trotsky are accused of "betrayal" of this aim.

The foreign center of the SAP even before it had any knowledge of the quoted decision of the Enlarged Party Executive, in June 1933, at a meeting of the International Bureau of the IAG (International Workers Group) in Brussels, presented a resolution in favor of "a thorough-going renovation of the international labor movement". This resolution was written for the International Workers Group (IAG), that is, for a group which in its majority was not yet in favor of the thought of the new International. But the majority of the parties were prepared to go on roads which in their consequences had to lead to the new International. The sense of this resolution, therefore, was to tie up with the given development of the different parties, in order to further their subsequent development. The Trotskyites declared this resolution to be correct in July, 1933; but in August, as we shall see in the Chapter "The Bureau for Revolutionary Socialist Unity", they declared that in the meantime, this resolution had become reactionary.

In August, 1933, the SAP together with the OSP (Independent Socialist Party of Holland) and the RSP (Revolutionary Socialist Party of Holland) and the ICL (Internationalist Communist League) signed the so-called Declaration of Four. Although only a few days later at the August conference arranged by the IAG, it turned out impossible to carry on a half-way sensible policy with the Trotskyites, the SAP continued to make efforts to attempt an understanding with them, and set down its position on the question of the International in a number of documents. We refer interested readers to Nos. 2 and 6 of the "Beue Front" for the year 1934. In this place, we must limit ourselves to the reproduction of a few essential passages.

As to the international essence of the proletarian struggle and the necessity for a revolutionary International, we wrote:

"The political will of classes must create organs for their expression and for their actual functioning in order to arrive at historical effectiveness. Their form must be suitable to the tasks which are placed before them and to the given

external conditions. The struggle for socialism, which, according to its nature, is of an absolutely international character, requires a tight combination and unified utilization of all proletarian forces on an international basis, that is, an International with unified leadership. It must start with the principled revolutionary character of its task and know how to take account of the concrete circumstances of the international class struggle on every sector of the front as well as the meaning of each individual country for the whole."

The SAP is of the opinion that the creation of the New International is possible only as the result of an historical process; that it is a task of revolutionists to intervene actively in this process (not, as the Trotskyists slanderously declare, by fatalistically letting the process run its course), that this is best done, not by the abstract propagation of a new organizational form (Fourth International), which is necessarily unintelligible to the masses, but by concrete proposals and actions which serve the revolutionary development of the proletariat and which tie up with the immediate needs and the situation of the proletarian masses. It is convinced that this new International can come into existence and lead to victory only as a communist and (not as a centrist, as a "two-and-one-half" or reformist one), and with the active collaboration of the mass of revolutionists. All this the SAP has repeatedly declared; by these views it is guided in its policies, and therefore, rejects the conscious untruths of Trotsky. Moreover, it is worth while to note that the intransigent Trotsky declared that it was possible that the 4th International "could arise out of the unification of the 2nd and 3rd Internationals by means of a regroupment of the elements and the continued cleansing and hardening of the ranks in the fire of the struggle". ("UW" No.33, Sept. 1934, "The Way Out").

We are of the opinion that the foundation of the International today is not yet within the realm of possibility, while the Trotskyites are busily engaged in bringing into the world a premature birth which is incapable of survival. Since the latter declare this to be untrue, we quote only two statements recently made:

1. "For the Bolshevik-Leninists the organization of the 4th International is an urgent task". (International Bulletin of the ICL, May, 1935).
2. "If the revolutionary Marxists of all countries ... at once create an international unification under their own banner, they will hasten the inevitable collapse of the IAG as well as of both other Internationals". ("UW", end of May, 1935).

We are of the opinion that there is no real International today; a reformist International cannot be a real International because the essence of reformism consists in the fact that each reformist party adapts itself to its own bourgeoisie and therefore cannot be internationalist. Thus we see today that the so-called 2nd International cannot adopt a single politically important position without completely falling apart. But the 3rd International is a tool of the alleged interests of Soviet Russian Foreign Policy. As to what makes it unable to fulfill its task, we wrote in January, 1934, and the reader may compare with the developments since then:

"The strategists of the Third International, by trying to postpone the world revolution to the time when the construction in Russia will have reached the goal which has been set, are preparing the road for fascism in the capitalist countries. But even if this postponement succeeded, they could not eliminate the dynamics of the capitalist contradictions which lead to a world war. Their non-aggression pacts can prevent war just as little as the League of Nations and the other in-

struments of Social-Democratic peace policy ... Perhaps the USSR will have one capitalist ally or another at its side, perhaps be able to neutralize one imperialist or another. It will thereby gain nothing in importance as a revolutionary force, but rather find itself in the greatest dependence on its capitalist "friends". It will have to pay for this "friendship" and neutrality by giving up all internationalist-revolutionary policies, for class interests are stronger than paper treaties. It is not the capitalists who have anything to fear from the connection with the "revolutionary" regime but on the contrary, once the war machine has been started, they will not stop at any kind of political blackmail."

From this situation we drew the conclusion that a real International had still to be created.

Everywhere, but above all, in the mass parties of the 2nd International, we saw and still see elements who are honestly even if often confusedly endeavoring to go the road of the revolution. We said:

"Here is the point of attack, without passing by the valuable proletarian parts which in some countries still stand by the Comintern parties. For these parts will leave the so-called Communist Parties when they recognize the success of the reconstruction which we are attempting. This success cannot be achieved by the proclamation of abstract principles, no matter how correct they may be, nor by the raising of banners, beautiful as they may be. It would be a fatal error for the vanguard to think that it can jump over the stages of development of proletarian consciousness. It would be senseless to believe that some day, if not today then tomorrow, the masses will spontaneously recognize the correctness of these principles and gather around them. It is rather a question of intervening practically in this process of development, never forgetting that when one wants to put the result of a development of consciousness at the beginning, one endangers the whole development thereby. One must understand how to ally oneself with the bearers of the leftward development in the reformist parties, and in a certain sense even to fuse with them -- in which everything depends exclusively on whether one understands how to apply these tactics to raise and not to lower the general level of proletarian class-consciousness, of revolutionary spirit, of capacity for struggle and victory. The cadres of the new International 'are produced only through painstaking work, through hard work; their development is facilitated by the correct revolutionary theory, which for its part is no dogma but takes on its final form only in close connection with the practice of a true revolutionary mass movement' (Lenin). But we will not travel the road of the idealistic sects, which instead of regarding the living processes within the proletariat devote their main energy to fractional polemics, speculate in mystical manner over empty conceptions, and classify the various species of 'centrism' ...

"...In the measure in which we succeed here in winning the confidence of broad circles of the world working class in reality, the principles of Communism too will be developed among them. But at the end of this struggle there will stand the revolutionary International of unity which the proletariat needs in order to conquer."

We are of the opinion that the new International should tie up with the profound will for unity of the masses -- a unity which in reality can be reached only on the basis of Communism.

"The slogans and principles of the Communist parties are the only basis on which the working class can re-unite itself, because they express the necessity of the proletarian struggle". (Theses on Tactics of the III World Congress of the CI).

In this sense we wrote in January, 1934:

"The international and revolutionary unity which is a bitter necessity, is not to be realized with Stalin and surely not with Vandervelde. But it must be realized in spite of all difficulties and soon, too. War, fascism, anti-Soviet intervention, are evermore terrible threats. Even today, most workers already understand this, and they learn this fact anew from day to day. And it is this penetrating everyday experience which will pave the way for the International of unity. It will not arise as an organization competing with the two Internationals which have only an external existence, but it will be the International. It will not be realized from one day to the next. No serious person thinks that it need only be "proclaimed" to draw the masses to itself. It can only be the result of a serious and thoroughgoing discussion among the broadest layers of the workers, a discussion which will take place in the closest possible connection with the daily experiences of the class struggle."

We are of the opinion that the homogeneity necessary for the International can result only from common experience -- that every abstract swearing by principles learned by heart, or by a leading figure, results in only a ridiculous caricature of a real agreement in action and in truth. Finally, we are of the opinion that the new International will be ridiculous if it consists of meaningless sects, and that its theoretical basis must not consist of a few ready-made formulas, but must be created in the course of its formation.

Our efforts are directed to welding together the independent revolutionary forces, while the Trotskyites want to break up the "International Bureau for Revolutionary Socialist Unity" (IAG). Therefore, at the conference in February, 1935, it was not possible to come to an agreement on the question of the International with the only Trotskyite present. The SAP proposed to the conference the following resolutions:

"In view of the complete failure of the 2nd and 3rd Internationals, the Conference states the fact that the international revolutionary labor movement has at the present time, no leadership which bears the confidence of the movement, and that it is therefore necessary to create such a leadership, i.e., a real proletarian International.

"The Conference emphasizes the fact that the necessary international revolutionary leadership can be built only as the result of an historical process and only through the collaboration of the revolutionary elements within and without the existing Internationals. It states further that this leadership can arise only on the basis of a thoroughgoing renovation of the international labor movement.

"In order to hasten the coming into existence of a proletarian International, capable of action, the only one which can realize the necessary unity on a revolutionary basis, the parties represented at the conference resolve:

- 1) To concentrate all their forces on the development of international action, and
- 2) To utilize all possibilities for co-ordinating those forces which are prepared for action within an international framework and at the same time to build the International Workers Group (IAG)".

The only one who voted against this resolution was Comrade Sneevliet, who represented the position of the Trotskyites on this question. The present Chairman of the RSAP of Holland, Comrade P.J. Schmidt, abstained. All the other delegates voted for the resolution. Outside of the SAP, these were the representatives of the Socialist Party of Sweden, the ILP of England, the Red Front of Austria, the Iberian Communist Party of Spain, the Independent Socialist Party of Poland, the Socialist Party (Maximalists) of Italy, and the Doriot group of France.

This resolution and this vote brought us into the special disfavor of the Trotskyite group. For the ICL, it meant the betrayal of the idea of the International. We, on the other hand, are of the opinion that in fact and truth, the creation of a real International has been exceptionally hindered by the sectarian policies of the Trotskyites, and that a real support of the process of development of the new International is possible only on our political line.

"IDEALISTIC SUBJECTIVISM"

For Trotsky, practically everything in the labor movement, except open reformism and except his own group, is centrism. Centrism - that includes the left wing in the pre-war German Social-Democracy, Otto Bauer and Leon Blum, the left SFIO and the ILP of England, the SAP and the NAP, Brandler and Stalin. If, as a rule, concepts serve the Marxist as auxiliary means for concrete distinctions, here centrism has become a night in which necessarily all cats are gray. Whence comes this conception of Trotsky?

In his pamphlet, "What Next?", Trotsky defines it as follows:

"Marxism, as well as reformism, have each a firm social support under their feet. Marxism expresses the historical interests of the proletariat. Reformism corresponds to the privileged position of the proletarian bureaucracy and aristocracy in the capitalist state."

Centrism is an ideological tendency moving between these two, which, with the exception of the Soviet bureaucracy, has otherwise no firm social basis. Apart from the fact that the characterization of historical interests as a firm social basis is impossible, this sentence shows an inadequate understanding by its author of reformism and therefore of a whole epoch of the western European labor movement. Instead of comprehending reformism in the form which it took on in the course of history as a historical stage of development of proletarian consciousness, essentially conditioned by the period of capitalist upswing, he considers it the exclusive ideology of a thin layer of "aristocrats of labor" who "seduce" the masses. He counterposes to reformism the 100% Marxism which is in possession of a small vanguard. But the sign of this Marxism is the acceptance of the slogan or fetish which is given out at any particular time (e.g., 4th International). In order to sustain this definition, Trotsky compares centrism with the petty bourgeoisie, whose ideological expression also is iridescent and many-colored, according to place and time; Jacobinism, pacifism, Proudhonism, fascism, etc. But this is just what induced the Marxists to apply different concepts to these different forms of ideological expression.

We do not state for a moment that there is no such thing as centrism. If one means by that a certain attitude which combines the revolutionary phraseology with a non-revolutionary practice, then indeed centrism is very often to be found, particularly in a period in which open reformism is disappearing from many parties. What we are opposed to is the idea that one has explained or determined anything

with this inadequate, abstract and blurred label, by pasting it on to any policy. It is a thoroughly external, idealistic method, to describe the policy of the Russian bureaucracy, because it is "sometimes right, sometimes left", as centrist, and unite it in a common conception with the policy of Leon Blum, the radical traditions of the French petty bourgeoisie, with the thoroughly confused but, as proven by actions, revolutionary (not communist!) position of Largo Caballero etc. Trotsky, by placing the social layer of the petty bourgeoisie on the same plane with the ideology of centrism, and by transcribing "historical interests" into a social support, abandons the ground of materialism. This is also expressed in his organization, his propaganda and his policy.

The organization of Trotsky arose as an opposition group, which had real roots, practically in Russia alone. This origin is very important, because it is impossible to create an organization which is serious and actually bound up with the working class, in one country, on the basis of experiences which have been made in other countries. The proletariat and even its most advanced layers learn practically everything from their own immediate experience and very little from the experiences of others transmitted through books. These layers learn from the international experience only insofar as a similar development opens up in their own country. No wonder that the real proletarian opposition groups bear so often a "nationally limited" character. (See for instance, various opposition groups that arose from the CI).

It is mostly intellectuals that learn from books. The relationship of an intellectual to that class which he ideologically represents or wants to represent is transmitted through ideology, while the relation of the proletariat to socialism arises from its immediate life. The points of departure which result from the situation of the worker in society must be developed by the revolutionary party to higher form through action and propaganda, and thereby so far as possible, the bourgeois influence on the proletarian masses destroyed.

The revolutionary intellectual can play a positive historical role only insofar as he is firmly connected with the decisive layers of the proletariat.

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The national organizations of Trotskyism have developed on the basis of principled criticism and its application to individual countries, particularly Russia and China. No wonder they assumed almost everywhere the character of intellectual propagandist clubs.

But vanguard and propaganda club are entirely different things! In countries with a developed proletariat, the vanguard is built not through the proclamation of abstract principles, no matter how correct they are, but by constant participation in the concrete daily struggle. Out of these struggles grow and are tested those elements which win the confidence of their class comrades. These elements must constitute the nucleus of the revolutionary party.

The propaganda circle "is right", wants to bring its truth to its listeners and thinks that that is the whole question. If we are dealing with an historical critics' club, such a view can pass. But for a revolutionary political group which does not want to interpret the world but change it, "to be right", means: in the immediate struggle together with the class, to seize the next link in the chain, whatever it may be at any particular time.

(Note: "Communist propaganda and education must root itself, first of all, in the very midst of the proletariat. It must grow out of the concrete life of the workers, out of their common interests and efforts, and especially out of their common struggles". (Principles of the Organizational Structure of Communist Parties, the Methods and the Content of their Work; 3rd World Congress of the CI)).

But the idealistic view of the propaganda circle characterizes most of the Trotskyist groups and is strengthened by their organizational principles. It is therefore, only too understandable that proletarian elements are repelled by them after a short time, and larger groups which have arisen autonomously and joined the ICL, mostly go away again.

Were not the perspectives for Germany, the criticism of the Chinese policy, the recognition of the need for a 4th International, all correct?

True enough! All this is in its essence, quite "right". But it does not answer the concrete immediate needs of the proletariat, does not show the next link in the chain, the next step forward, and is represented by the "people who are always right", who are not connected with the proletarians in their daily life. That explains why German Trotskyism, in spite of the widely diffused, correct, brilliantly formulated, criticisms of Trotsky, surrounded by the glory of the Russian revolution, after they were proved to be correct, melted together into a tiny group. And the same disproportion exists everywhere.

When Sneeveliet declared at the Paris conference in February, 1933, that one had to place uncompromisingly the new idea of the 4th International before the masses, who are entangled in reactionary views - in this position we have the whole idealism of Trotsky's policy. It is not a question of "confronting" historical reality with an "idea", but of developing this same idea out of the reality through one's own patient concrete daily practice, i.e., to bring the class so far that it will understand the aim of the new International as necessary through its own daily experience in struggle.

(Note: What we demand, therefore, is absolutely not that anyone should "suppress" what is necessary, or "adapt" oneself to the most backward workers by making concessions of content to their reactionary wishes,

but that one should tie up to the given level of the masses in order to raise it by concrete slogans and actions).

Finally, it is no wonder that Trotskyism in theory is so sharply marked by self-sufficient sterility. One has a tested conception, finished once and for all, by which one measures all events. But, according to the already quoted phrases of Lenin, Marxism can develop further only in connection with the development of a revolutionary mass movement. This connection does not exist among the Trotsky groups. It is therefore not surprising that the slogans of Trotskyism are partly correct but not new (united front, militia, etc.), partly new but not correct ("for a Blum-Cachin government" in France, November, 1934), partly new and correct, but handed out like a fetish (4th International). It results just as clearly from its essence, that Trotskyism regards itself as the navel of the world, and always attributes to its own influence every slogan which other groups set up at the same time with or after it.

For a time, Trotsky was compelled to recognize this fundamental fault of his organization, when he posed the question of the entry of his French section into the SFIO. Trotsky wrote at that time: "for a revolutionary, it is not enough to have correct ideas ... The task of the revolutionary party is to weld the 'correct ideas' to the mass labor movement. Only then does the idea become a driving force. ...One can write and read revolutionary articles and still remain in fact outside of the revolutionary movement. One can give good advice to the workers' organizations from the outside. That is something. But that is still not a revolutionary organization."

This was a beginning toward self-understanding. But its limitations were shown even here, as is clear from the following sentence: "the Ligue (as well as the other sections) saw itself compelled to develop as an isolated propaganda group. This determined both its positive sides (honest and serious attitude to principles, firmness in ideas) as well as its negative side (consideration of the labor movement from the outside)".

Marxist principles do not exist in empty space, do not exist independently of practice. He who regards the labor movement from the outside cannot be "firm in his principles". For firmness in principles is first tested in concrete policies, which are not possible outside of the movement, and the principles themselves are rooted in practice.

The brilliantly formulated general views of Trotsky always sound convincing, while their abstractness and emptiness only shows itself after one's own experience and on concrete examination.

Idealism is Trotsky's fundamental trait. We find it in his political criticism of 1923, of our peace resolution, of the Zimmerwald idea; in his propaganda, in the fetish-like character of his slogans; in his love of historical parallels which are used not as illustrations but as central means for concrete analysis (Thermidor, August 4th); in his fondness for abstract super-historical concepts and labels (centrism). He confuses reality with his own wishes, operates with ever so distorted historical examples, puts abstract fetish-slogans in the foreground, and selects his people accordingly.

Just a few examples from the recent period:

We saw above that Trotsky declared that after the victory of Hitler, the CPG "would fall away into nothingness", since an organization which is politically dead

could not survive organizationally. But it cannot be denied that the CPG (why that is so cannot be discussed here) remains now as before, the strongest anti-fascist organization in Germany!

After the prohibition of the CP of Austria became a large party only after the defeat. The saying, "what ought not to be cannot be" comes not from Marx but from Palmstroem, Morgenstern's hero.

(Note: Christian Morgenstern, a German bourgeois satirical versifier and essayist, created the character Palmstroem as a sardonic apotheosis of petty-bourgeois philistinism. - Trans.)

Further: at the Youth conference in Laren in 1934, there were originally two draft resolutions, one from the German Socialist Youth League (SJY), the other from the Dutch. The Trotskyites declared that the draft of the German SJY was, it is true, decidedly better than the Dutch, but that they would vote for the latter because -- it contained the slogan for the "Fourth International".

In the "Open Letter to the World Proletariat" issued by the International Secretariat of the Trotskyists at the end of May, 1935, and reprinted in "Unser Wort", in the middle of June, we find at the very beginning, the following statement: "Stalin has signed, jointly with the French Foreign Minister Laval, the death certificate of the 3rd International. There is today no longer a single worker no matter how politically backward he may be, who does not know that the Soviet bureaucracy has now openly and finally betrayed the International proletariat."

This quotation ought to go down in history as a classic example of subjectivism. According to it, the sections of the CI, one and all, ought to have disappeared from the face of the earth. But in fact, there is nothing of the sort -- not even to speak of the "backward", reformist, Catholic and nationalistic workers. After this quotation, is a further discussion still possible among thinking revolutionists?

We have seen that this idealistic method permeates the theoretical essence, the political criticism and the views of Trotskyism. The organizational structure can only correspond to this political content -- we have shown it in its development. Opponents on the other hand must necessarily be branded more or less as "wicked people", "traitors", etc. All of this makes Trotskyism a destructive element in the international labor movement.

THE FUNDAMENTAL STRATEGIC PRINCIPLE OF TROTSKYISM AND "THAT WHICH IS".

The most important strategic doctrines which constitute the foundation of the present views of Trotsky are: 1) the criticism of Stalin and the CPO (Right Opposition, Brandlerites) because of the "Betrayal" of the German revolution of 1923. 2) The criticism of the policy of the "Anglo-Russian Committee" of 1925-6. 3) The criticism of the false policies of the Comintern in China.

These points are utilized against the SAP as follows: It did not understand the experience of 1923 and its present leaders participated in a leading capacity in the policies of that time; it is repeating the policy of the Anglo-Russian Committee by its policy of collaboration with the independent parties and the NAP (Norwegian Labor Party)*; it has not understood the experience of the Chinese revolution.

*(Note: It is true that this "fundamental" criticism is utilized only when needed, i.e., very opportunistically. If Trotsky wants to unite with someone, he is willing to close an eye. This is true not only of cases like Maria Reese (of whom we will speak later), but also of the SAP. In fact, when Comrade Schumb of the SAP, was negotiating for several days in the summer of 1933 with Trotsky, and had in no way concealed the differences in the estimation of 1923, Trotsky wrote to him as follows: "I will not by any means deny that there are differences in our approach to questions which are evidently to be explained by the past of our organizations. But these differences do not seem to me to be of a principle nature. More than that, with good will on both sides, they can very advantageously round each other out ('ergaenzen') and make each other more fruitful ('befruchten')." !!

Let us see very briefly how these arguments stand.

1) 1923. The CI and the CPG carried on a wrong policy in 1923 based upon wrong analyses of the situation. Before the strike of August, 1923, against the Cuno government, the Party and the CI underestimated the revolutionary situation in Germany. The Cuno strike woke them up and now they fell into the opposite mistake; without understanding that August marked the peak of the revolutionary development, they regarded it as a beginning and prepared for insurrection. The impossibility of this line was shown in October at Chemnitz at a super-party conference of shop-delegates of the Saxon workers. The proposals for the offensive made by the Communists were received with such coolness and hostility by the hundredsof workers' representatives, that all the leading functionaries of the Party (including the lefts!) realized the impossibility of this proposal. But this impossibility was clearly proven and confirmed by another event; in spite of the party's orders to avoid any offensive actions, the insurrection took place in Hamburg - prepared in isolation from the working class - because the courier service broke down. Here in Hamburg with its tremendous Communist following, there struggled 300 Communist workers - no more and no less - completely isolated from the masses, while twice as many workers placed themselves at the disposal of the authorities as voluntary guardians of bourgeois order! What were the reasons for the two false analyses of the Party cannot be investigated here. But contrary to the October legend fabricated by Trotsky for factional reasons, it is important, in addition to the foregoing facts, to look at Trotsky's position at that time. In June, 1923, a session of the ECCI (Executive Committee of the CI) took place, at which, among other things, there was a discussion of the German question. Trotsky was present. He neither criticized nor made any proposals!! After the Cuno strike on the other hand, he was the most active representative of the line of insurrection, who regarded the others as "sleepyheads". How wrong Trotsky's political position was, was shown not only by the later events, but also by his constant pointing out that the party should only organize, keep right on organizing, it did not need to worry about policies, those would be made by the enemy. Engrossed in the fever of uninterrupted organizing, disregarding questions of policy, the Party lost all interest and all living connection with the real movement of the masses. Finally, in January, 1924, Radek brought in a resolution in the sense of the majority of the German Central Committee (21 "rights", 7 "lefts"). This resolution bears Trotsky's signature!

Only in the summer of 1924, did Trotsky begin to accuse first Zinoviev, then the German CC, and later Stalin too, of "betrayal" of the German revolution.

In Trotsky's criticism of 1923, there is the same idealism which marks his other views.

The German CC and its attitude was compared by him with the attitude of Zinoviev and Kameneff in October, 1917, who as is well known, fought against the insurrection which Lenin described as urgent. As far back as April, 1917, when the majority of the CC came out in favor of supporting the war and for unity negotiations with the Mensheviks, Lenin was able to paralyze the vacillating position of many leading functionaries only by supporting himself on the revolutionary will of the lower party cadres against the opportunism of the CC. He did the same in October, against the vacillating position of many leading functionaries. Had there been no Lenin, thinks Trotsky, the line of Kameneff and Zinoviev would have been carried through and victory would have become impossible in spite of the most favorable objective situation. In Germany, in 1923, the leaders of the party played the role of Zinoviev-Kameneff; there was no Lenin, and that is how the defeat took place.

This whole conception is thoroughly false.

On the relation of party and spontaneity, we once formulated the following general statement: "spontaneity without a party has no direction; a party without spontaneity has no effectiveness".

A disintegration of the existing social order, a stormy revolutionary urge among the masses can (and in the absence of a revolutionary leadership must) go up in smoke - but this situation will be expressed in deeds, in undirected mass action. It is not possible for a leadership to choke off a historical process at the last moment when tremendous and increasing social explosions are under way. If Kameneff and Zinoviev had won, perhaps the revolution would have bled to death, perhaps it would have become a tremendously enhanced repetition of the July days of 1917. But the explosion could not have been stopped.

In this connection we cannot deal with the problem of the great difference between an essentially bourgeois revolution such as the Russian revolution was in its beginnings, and a proletarian one which takes place in a highly developed country. But that is not necessary in order to realize the entire falsity of Trotsky's argumentation.

When in Germany, the CC of the CPG in its entirety, decided to drop the already announced insurrection, nothing happened, absolutely nothing! The masses remained quiet and where the party called on them, as in Hamburg, there the test was made. (We must emphasize the fact that the Hamburg fighters thought for a day and a half that the fight was going on in the whole Reich!)

Prospects of American Capitalism

NO. I.



BY B.J. FIELD

OF A SERIES ON

The Problems of the American Revolution

Is a better and more convincing proof possible? Is it not clear that the German situation of October, 1923 cannot be compared with the Russian in October, 1917? Finally, is it not clear that the view that a few people could prevent the outbreak of great social explosions by a wrong decision overestimates the significance of these people of the CC, the so-called "subjective factor", as much as it underestimates the role of the objective factor? But just this is idealistic subjectivism!

Our comrade Schwab who has been so strongly attacked by Trotsky has, it is true, always assumed his part of the responsibilities for the year 1923, although he could prove that he carried on an opposition in plenty of time within the then CC of the CPG against serious mistakes, and although he is of the opinion that the fundamental mistake of 1923 consisted in the fact that the CC of the CPG was all too subservient to the directives from Moscow.

In the interests of historical truth, it must be added that of the leading personalities in Moscow no one was so mistaken in the estimation of the German situation as precisely, Trotsky. His characteristic piece of advice, "you do not have to worry now about policies, the enemy will make them for you", was unfortunately, followed. But later on, this proved to be the worst mistake.

THE ANGLO-RUSSIAN COMMITTEE: This Committee was created in 1925. For the leaders of the Russian trade unions, its importance consisted in the fact that their partners in this agreement, certain English trade union leaders, contrary to the majority of the reformist trade union leaders of other countries, declared themselves in favor of unity with the Russian trade unions. Although the English trade union leaders, naturally, remained reformists, in and of itself there was no objection to a committee to further the creation of international trade union unity. The campaign for international trade union unity took on a tremendous upswing and contributed to an extraordinary strengthening of the opposition within the reformist trade unions. But suddenly, for internal Russian factional reasons, a turn took place in Moscow against unity. The Anglo-Russian Committee which thereupon lost its meaning was, however, converted into a political bloc with the reformist English trade union leaders. The English reformists set great value upon this bloc with the Russians which committed them to nothing, but considerably hampered the struggle of the English communists, for the great prestige of the Russian revolution helped these reformists to carry on unhindered their own reformist policy (choking off the general strike of 1926).

When Trotsky compares the IAG with the Anglo-Russian committee and accuses the SAP of playing today the same role as the Soviet Russian trade unions of 1926, he only shows of what ridiculous mistakes even great men are capable.

THE CHINESE REVOLUTION: One of the decisive attacks of Trotsky against the CI consists of the fact that it dissolved the CP of China and transferred it into the bourgeois Kuomintang of Chiang-Kai-Shek, thus totally disarming it. This reproach is thoroughly correct. And the SAP has never supported such a policy. But - the strongest section of the Trotskyists at present, that in Chile, although it naturally swears by the 4th International, carries out a policy which seems grievously similar to that of the CP of China. In fact, it has offered merger into a unified party not only to the Social-Democrats, but also - to the bourgeois radicals!

The Chilean Trotskyites formed a parliamentary bloc in October, 1934, with the Social-Democrats, the bourgeois democrats and the radical socialists for the protection of democratic liberties. The organ of the Trotskyites, "Izquierda", represents the bloc as a permanent one, and on January 2, 1935, writes: "the bloc

will be carried on further even in the sharpest proletarian struggles, even in strikes and insurrection". On December 12, 1934, the same paper states that by coming struggles against the bosses "the foundation will be laid for the new party, because we will have shown clearly the enormous advantages of the united front of the class".

THE BUREAU FOR REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST UNITY (formerly IAG)

The IAG arose at a time when the SAP was controlled by Seydowitz and Rosenfeld. Apart from the SAP, there belonged to it the OSP of Holland, the ILP of England, the NAP of Norway and the ILP of Poland.

From the very beginning, there was the greatest heterogeneity among the different parties. They were connected only by the fact that they all stood outside of the two existing Internationals.

For the new leadership of the SAP, the question arose whether to maintain these connections or break them off. From breaking off relations it could expect nothing; but from strengthening them, it hoped to contribute to the clarification of the other parties, to the broadening out and strengthening of the IAG, and to make it a center for the international regeneration of the labor movement. It therefore decided in favor of remaining in the IAG, and the International Secretariat of the Trotskyists, in its discussions with the SAP in May 1933 in Paris, declared its agreement with this line. To the explicit question, whether the IS demanded the immediate break of the IAG with the NAP, its representative answered in the negative.

At the August conference of the same year, however, the Trotskyites already demanded the execution of their political line, whose purpose and effect was to make it impossible for the SAP to remain further in the IAG and to bring about the break-up of the latter. They insisted that the SAP should vote against the resolution cited on page 8-9 which it had drawn up and handed in in June.

In their opinion, this resolution had become reactionary because of the declaration laid down by the OSP and RSP of Holland, the Trotskyites, and the SAP, in which these four groups declared themselves in favor of a new communist International. In answer to the point that in this resolution, except for one paragraph whose elimination the SAP had already moved, nothing was contained which was open to criticism from a communist standpoint and that moreover, this resolution had been rejected by the plenum of the ILP because of its "Trotskyist content", the Trotskyists declared that all this was true enough but that one must not vote even for the best of resolutions together with the NAP.

In the effort to bring about a joint position by the four parties which had put their signatures to a joint statement, the SAP proposed to abstain from voting, and give its reasons. After negotiations lasting for hours, this proposal was refused by the Trotskyists although it was known to them that comrade F.J.Schmidt as representative of the OSP had stated in writing that the OSP would withdraw from the Declaration of Four if the SAP would vote against the resolution brought in by the Bureau (to which the SAP belonged).

Since it was not possible to come to an understanding with the Trotskyists, the SAP and the OSP finally voted for the resolution, the Trotskyites against it. Thus arose the first serious difference. At first we still assumed that LT (Leon Trotsky) was not in agreement with the stupid position of the Left Opposition

delegation. This was a false assumption. Therefore the differences had to become even sharper later on, and it soon appeared that a real collaboration was impossible.

In order to make clear the ideas which guided our party within the IAG and at the same time its position toward the NAP, we quote below the answer of the Paris branch of the SAP to the theses of the LO. This resolution of ours dates from November 1933. It states with regard to the attacks which the LO directed against us because of our position toward the NAP: "...the NAP is the only party of the Norwegian workers; alongside of it the Communist Party is an insignificant fact. Among the Norwegian workers there is not only a strong desire for unity but also a striving for revolutionary policy which manifested itself in the last few years in great strike struggles and prevented the NAP from joining the 2nd International. Accordingly, our policy must aim to strengthen those forces within the NAP which are endeavoring to transform the NAP into a revolutionary party....

"The SAP is for a number of reasons not in a position to exercise a sufficiently strong influence on the NAP. That would be first of all the task of the IAG. But in considering the latter, one must take into account that at the beginning it was neither able nor willing to exercise the corresponding influence on the NAP. This possibility first began to develop when the nature of the IAG changed with the revolutionary transformation of the SAP, the corresponding developments in the OSP and the left development in the ILP. But even in its present condition, the IAG is effective only to a very limited extent. If the LO were to join the IAG, if the Independent Communists of Sweden and the Mot Dag group were to belong to it, and both of them are in all probability prepared for this step, then the Communist wing would obtain the supremacy within the IAG. Thereby, a) a decisive influence in the direction of the 4th International would be brought to bear within the ILP and the Independent Communists of Sweden; b) the basis of the future 4th International would be broadened; c) the prestige of the IAG would be strengthened; d) the possibilities of influence upon the Norwegian workers in a revolutionary sense would be greatly enhanced.

"The refusal of the LO up to now to participate in the IAG arose from a sectarian tendency, a fear of compromising itself before any opponents whatever, and led to serious tactical mistakes..."

In connection with the resolution at the conference of August, 1933, which was attacked by the LO, we said: "It is evidence of a false, subjective approach to designate an opinion as reactionary when it is not upon the same high level as the insight of the vanguard. The declarations of groups are to be estimated in accordance with the process of their development and with an eye to the consciousness of the mass of the proletariat. From both these points of view, the resolution is a positive step. The vanguard cannot take away from the masses their experience. It must neither pose ultimatums, "all or nothing", nor march so far ahead of the masses that it loses contact with them. In this case it was enough that the vanguard should mark itself off from what is directly false in the resolution, which was done, and set up a further milestone in the form of a resolution of its own.

"It is also an expression of the same fatal approach to declare that one ought not to vote together with the NAP even for the best document for the regeneration of the labor movement. Apart from the fact that no one can stop the NAP from voting for anything it want to, one can, if the NAP leadership in its practice comes into contradiction with its declarations, utilize this contradiction in the interests of the revolutionary development of the workers who are striving toward the left.

"Moreover, if one considers open support of the OSP for the new International as progressive, one must also estimate the means which lead to this result as progressive too. That is why we call your attention again to the fact that the leader of the OSP announced the withdrawal of his signature from this document if the SAP were to vote against the resolution of the whole...."

In answer to the statement that the connection with the NAP was compromising the idea of the new International, we declared: "Our enemies will always slander us whatever we may do. Even the LO, as is well-known, was attacked for its participation in the Paris conference jointly with the PUP (Party of Proletarian Unification of France), Steinberg and Co. The only thing important is that we should do only what we can support on the basis of our principles, that at the same time, we should not compromise ourselves before the masses of workers, and so drive the revolutionary development forward not only in theory but in reality. The more we succeed in showing that it was reformism and Stalinism which brought the proletariat into its miserable condition of impotence and splits, the more we give our efforts the character of gathering forces on the platform of the revolutionary class struggle and the less we give it the character of another split, so much the less will we compromise ourselves in the eyes of the masses who are filled with a desire for unity, so much the better will the revolutionary development be driven forward...."

Not to split but to win over. On this point we said, "it is clear that the left wing in the NAP can come forward only under the banner of winning over the party. Not only that if it came forward in any other manner it would never be able to win the workers fulfilled with the will to unity, but that is also the only way in which the reformists can be burdened with the blame for splitting."

"We have never reproached the LO for posing the problem organizationally and not politically; what we reproach it with is that it puts before the mass of leftward developing Norwegian workers, the question of split, not as the result of a decisive revolutionary policy, but in the very beginning as an aim and principle. To them, this result is not yet known, is not conscious, but it is to be expected as the organizational result of historical experience. Since the LO, without regard to the moods of the workers, wants to put at the beginning what can come only as a result, and then only because the centrists and reformists will not permit the lefts to win over the majority, it endangers the whole development. That is what we mean, and we are surprised that the LO could have so misunderstood it.."

From these quotations any reader can easily see how distorted and untrue the Trotskyist criticism of us is. But we will not permit the Trotskyists to hand out their sophistry without contradiction.

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In the meantime, the NAP has lost interest in the IAG, but other groups have joined it; the Red Front of Austria, the Socialist Party of Sweden, the Iberian Communist Federation of Spain, the Doriot group of France. The ideological homogeneity has risen compared with 1933. Frankly, only in words. But are not statements in favor of the 4th International also declarations in words? Is it not better, instead of a declamatory break which will have no meaning for the other organizations, in view of the loose connection of the IAG, to work to make these connections tighter, so as to be able to insist that words become deeds? Is it not better to create a closer connection in order to contribute to greater clarity by broader discussions which will include even the circle of functionaries of the various parties?

But no! Trotsky wants these parties to be given a quick exit, in order to go with the part that is "little but perfect" and swears by the 4th International. But we could not expect much influence on the real development if, as the Trotskyites demanded at the conference of August, 1933, we had separated ourselves by our behavior from the OSP and the other parties in order to remain alone with him. Even today we cannot expect anything from such a policy.

It is true, our own forces are very weak, as Trotsky "loyally" forgets; the small number of the SAP enigmas, their enormously difficult material and civil situation constitute serious objective difficulties.

It is true, the present composition of the IAG is not eternal; perhaps many will go and others come.

It is true, and most important, that the IAG can play a role only if it is really doing work, only if it maintains a continual contact and a constant comradely discussion among the organizations, only if it constantly takes a position on the most important questions of the international development, if it gains through its work a minimum of agreement on principle, and if it endeavors to broaden its influence. If and how it does all this, will decide its fate.

PEACE ACTION. Together with the IAG in general, Trotsky attacks our work within it. The Trotskyites turn their main fire against the peace resolution proposed by the SAP in the conference of February 1935 with representatives of the lefts in the 2nd International. They do not spare historical parallels and quotations from Lenin. Only one thing is not done: the analysis of the real situation.

What are the most important arguments directed against our proposal?

- 1) Slogans such as "disarmament" and "peace" render the proletariat impotent and cultivate pacifist illusions.
- 2) The demand for disarmament resettles the reformist demands addressed to the bourgeois state for dissolution of the fascist bands.
- 3) What is proposed is only a new edition of the Stalinist "Amsterdam-Pleyel" committees, parades with the petty bourgeoisie, etc.

Before we examine these arguments for their soundness, let us first set down the fact that this impression obviously did not arise among the other participants in the conference, and that even the DutchRSAP made no objections to our proposal.

The sense of the proposed resolution becomes quite clear if understood in the spirit of another document prepared by the SAP and laid before the conference,

"Theses for Revolutionary Social Policy" (Neue Front, Numbers 4-5), as an application of the theses contained there. In this document which the Trotskyites "forget", but which attempts to show concrete ways for the regeneration of the labor movement and the new International, we say among other things; "In the demands which we set up we must see to it, first of all, that the struggle for them must be of such a nature as will bring the masses into movement and organize them ... The individual slogans must be tied up directly with the living necessities and demands of the layers of the people that are suffering under capitalism". We say further, "Unclear and utopian as the demands of various layers of the people in a given situation may be, nevertheless it is necessary to tie up to them or even take them over, insofar as revolutionary political results can be achieved thereby".

As organs of struggle, the "People's Militia" are specifically named. One example to show how true are the accusations of Trotskyism that we are for the disarmament of the proletariat!

Now it is beyond a doubt that the desire for peace is deeply anchored in the hearts of millions. It is equally beyond a doubt that war cannot be uprooted without the overthrow of capitalism and that capitalism can be overthrown only by revolution. It is also beyond a doubt that the pacifism of broad masses of the people is utopian. Therefore, we say clearly and definitely at the close of our peace resolution (NF No.6), which the Trotskyites "forget" to mention, "The supporters of this resolution in endeavoring to utilize the desire for peace that lives in millions and millions of people as a lever to set loose a world-wide anti-war movement supported by the masses of people of all countries, are fully aware of the fact that the struggle for disarmament is directed against an instrument of capitalist robber policy which is necessary for its life, and therefore against the capitalist system itself. On the other hand, they are also clear as to the fact that many millions who would be prepared to take part in international action for peace have not yet understood this connection, and that they will realize only in the course of the action, on the basis of the experience which they go through in it, that the overthrow of capitalism and the realization of socialism will create the pre-requisites for assuring peace and smashing the machinery of war".

As can be seen, it is not a question of a parliamentary demand put before the governments, but of the development of mass action which, tying up to the desires of the masses must have revolutionary consequences. That precisely for this reason, this has nothing to do with the "Amsterdam-Pleyel" parades of Muenzenberg - does this still have to be explained?

Mass illusions cannot be removed with abstract words, scoldings, theories, as the idealists think, but only by action, in which the masses through their own experience themselves realize that these are illusions, and thus advance under the leadership of the revolutionary vanguard to higher stages of consciousness and struggle. Trotsky's criticism resembles to a T all the arguments of all the idealistic sectarians against transitional slogans, which allegedly also create illusions - arguments which are naturally also bedecked with the requisite quotations from authorities. To turn away from these illusions which, once and for all, do exist, and mutter words of irritation, instead of utilizing such of them as bear revolutionary consequences, to call out abstract fetishes (4th International) to the masses - precisely this is the essence of sectarian idealism! But we think that through concrete examples, proposals that are understood by the masses, the setting loose of actions which tie up to their immediate concerns and needs, one can come sooner to the new International than through verbose manifestos "to the proletarians of both hemispheres" !

Finally, we do not want to conceal from the reader the fact that precisely in this manifesto in favor of the 4th International addressed "To the Proletarians of Both Hemispheres" (Unser Wort, March 1934) one of the central slogans printed in bold type at the end of the appeal is:

"AGAINST WAR; FOR PEACE AND THE RECONCILIATION OF THE PEOPLES!"

Think of it - "for peace and the reconciliation of the peoples"!!

That is how the method and the loyalty of Trotskyist criticism looks on this field too!

NEW ZIMMERWALD : The Trotskyists in "drawing up their principle accounts" with us also direct their criticism by the way against this idea too. Their reasons can easily be found there. Here are counter-reasons in brief:

Few are ready today to go the road of the 4th International. A greater number of workers is prepared to come out against civil peace in the next war. Many of them will fall away later, people tell us. That may be. But that does not change the task of making an effort even today to assemble these forces. If I put forward a slogan "4th International", few will come, and even among these few, experience has shown, there will be many who will desert. But if I gather together first of all, all those who are prepared to struggle for the proletarian revolution and against civil peace, I will include much broader circles on this basis, and will have taken a practical step for the genuine regeneration of the international labor movement. At such a conference, there will be represented at first, tendencies of the most different kinds. Their composition will be even less homogeneous than that of the conferences of the International Bureau. At such a conference we must expect the participation of radical pacifists, centrists of all kinds, syndicalists and anarchists. The supporters of the new International will make proposals, will in no way "conceal" their principles, will concretize their principles in proposals for action, will represent a new "Zimmerwald Left". The more clear and consistent this left will be, the more it understands how to make itself the motor of the whole movement by its work and its proposals, the more effectively it will also work for the new International. Isn't this clear?

"The Bolsheviks do not need to connect themselves with centrist leaders", says the section directed against Zimmerwald.

Whether they need it, we do not know. But - they do it! For, behold and wonder, in Paris the followers of Trotsky have just joined with syndicalists (Monatte), centrists (Left SFIO and Doriot) to create a joint committee in June 1935, which is preparing a national conference of all who take position against civil peace, first on a national, later on an international scale.

The "Bolshevik-Leninists" love of truth is badly off, very badly off. Badly off, too, is that saying which Trotsky holds so dear, "Speak out that which is!"

Read **LABOR FRONT**

THE YOUTH BUREAU (De KADT CLIQUE AND THE TRUTH)

("The Stockholm Youth Bureau was created with fictitious quantities; the mirage of the WAF and the little De Kadt clique which "represented" the OSP. The SLP came together with the shadow of the NAF and the very real petty bourgeois philistine De Kadt (against the Bolsheviks any alliance is good), in order to get the leadership of the Stockholm Youth Bureau into its hands".)

The International Youth Conference called in February 1934 by the Dutch SJV (Socialist Youth League), adopted a political resolution proposed by the German SJV unanimously, after a fairly long debate, and on the basis of this resolution decided to found the International Youth Bureau. A representative each of the German and of the Swedish Leagues, and of the Trotskyist Youth were elected unanimously to the Secretariat. The NAF Youth was represented at the conference it is true, but did not take part in the decisions, for which reason the German SJV could not very well have "come together" with it. The Dutch SJV was represented not by DeKadt but by Molenaar, then chairman of the Dutch League and today member of the party executive of the RSAP. Obviously, he is counted as belonging to the "De Kadt Clique".

As far as De Kadt himself is concerned, he was at that time, the chairman of the Dutch party while Schmidt was in prison. (Sections of the "Declaration of Four" come from the pen of this "philistine"!!) In his character as representative of the OSP, he was in negotiations with the SLP, but when he left the party after the struggles in Amsterdam, the SLP did not hesitate to separate itself from him openly and sharply. But Trotsky too, negotiated with De Kadt and wrote him extraordinarily amiable letters, while he later repeatedly attacked the whole OSP and its leadership as "centrist". (See "Centrism and the 4th International above").

The "loyal" maneuver of the Trotskyists consists simply in ensnaring the members of the Dutch party by lies and inciting them against the SLP. He must think these members are very short of memory and stupid to boot!

But the Youth Bureau was created without any intervention by De Kadt. After it was brought into existence, the members of the Secretariat agreed to execute only the unanimous decisions of the Secretariat. This was also done, and therefore it is impossible to conjure away the fact that the representative of the Trotskyists in the Secretariat is fully and completely co-responsible for its work and its publications. But that does not prevent the writer of the pamphlet from declaring that the SLP plays a ruinous role in this activity, while the French Trotskyists in a letter of May 14, 1935, write: "the whole work of the Bureau is directed against the ideas of the majority of the organizations which belong to it".

Measured by its possibilities, the Youth Bureau has done fruitful work. It has brought together a number of independent youth organizations, has made connections with certain circles in the Socialist Youth International, issued a regular International Bulletin. But if the Trotskyites had been but little friendly to the Bureau even before, as we know from letters of Trotsky which he wrote on this question, with regard to the Youth Conference at Lille in 1934, the open attacks began only in the spring of 1935. Brandt, the SJV representative in the Bureau was accused of "betrayal" (see the letter of the Trotskyist Spartacus Youth of the USA). The betrayal was allegedly committed at the conference of the International Bureau for Revolutionary Socialist Unity, when comrade Brandt took a position against Sneevliet. He is also supposed to have spoken against the new International. In point of fact, Brandt declared in the name of the Bureau that it is for the new International, and in the name of the Bureau also he voted for the Dutch resolution. On the other hand, in his character as functionary of the SLP, he represented its standpoint.

Then the Youth Bureau demanded the foundation of a sub-bureau in Paris for the Latin countries, the representative of the SJV - a political emigre! tried in vain for weeks to get the young Trotskyists here to do work. He did not succeed. Only in March 1935, was such work undertaken and finally, the first issue of the French Youth Bulletin appeared. In discussing the articles, the Trotskyists were represented by a woman comrade with little experience in international matters, who gave her agreement to an article written by one of our comrades. Fourteen days after the Bulletin was finished and copies were in possession of the Trotskyists (so that they had had two weeks' time to protest), there appeared in the French Trotskyists' paper, "Verite", an article in which the information was given, first that SAP emigres were taking part in the work of the French Youth Bureau (which is a police denunciation of the vilest kind!), second, that the SAP had falsified the leading article, and third, that the slogan contained therein, for revolutionary parties of unity, was illusory and confusing (but the Trotskyites had come out precisely for a revolutionary party of unity in their Declaration on entering the SFIO!), and that the SAP was fighting against the new International. Although a determined protest of the Parisian SJV comrades to the Youth Bureau followed, in which particularly the reproach of falsification was thrown back in their teeth on the basis of facts, they neither printed any correction nor made any statement whatever. Let the reader now form his own opinion as to this event.

But at the same time the Trotskyists were preparing the splitting of the Youth Bureau organizationally too, by setting up a counter-secretariat. In this they are only following the policy of the former Trotskyite and seotarian, Weisbord, who broke with the Youth Bureau because in it the line of the Trotskyist "betrayers" of the idea of the 4th International was dominating (Class Struggle, June 1935).

ON THE HISTORY AND STRUCTURE OF THE BOLSHEVIK-LENINISTS.

After the Trotskyists condemned the SAP and the IAG and the plan for a new Zimmerwald, they showed the revolutionists looking for a way out, the slogan: the 4th International. And its nucleus consists of that homogeneous international organization which already functions so brilliantly, "the Communist-Internationalist-Bolshevik-Leninists".

As far as the homogeneity of this international organization is concerned, it consists of the more or less platonic recognition of certain principles. The sharp criticism of the CI policy in China (one of its most important principles), nevertheless does not prevent the strongest Trotskyist section, the Chilean, from carrying out a policy which repeats precisely the decisive mistakes of the CI. We have already spoken of this above.

While the French "Bolshevik-Leninists" declare themselves for defeatism in the next war irrespective of the Franco-Russian alliance, the Workers Party of the USA in its program, which was written and approved by the Trotskyites, accuses the bourgeoisie of the USA in the case of war of betraying the USSR; in other words it declares that the workers of the US must come out in favor of decisive struggle on the side of the USSR and not for defeatism.

That there is no agreement between Trotsky and Snocvliet in the estimation of the Soviet Union has been clear for a long time. In the trade union question, the differences between them are still greater.

That then is how the "homogeneity" looks. How does the organization stand? "The short history of the work of the Leninists was at the same time a history of internal ideological struggle", says the document aimed against us. But among the

Trotskyists every ideological, as well as not-ideological, struggle means at the same time, split and expulsion. Of course, splits are often unavoidable, but the Trotskyist development is unwholesome through and through.

The Trotskyist organization exists since 1930. In these five years, apart from the splits at birth (Paz, Urbahns, Van Overstraeten), and only in the main sections (we do not want to make the Trotskyist center fully responsible for the organizational conditions in China and South Africa) it went through no less than 27 (twenty-seven) splits. In order to make it easier to check our statements, we will specify them by countries and by the people who left each time:

Belgium	1	(Vereeken)
Bulgaria	1	(Monoff)
Germany	3	(Landau, Well, Bauer)
England	2	(Groves, Herber)
France	7	(Rosmer, Treint, Rimbert, Jewish Group, Pradier, Lhuillier, Neville)
Greece	1	(Vitto - whereby the great majority of the strongest section was lost)
Italy	4	(Bordigists, Giacomo, Santini, Blasco - Santini was expelled in March, 1934, for proposing to join the SFIO and the SP of Italy. In July of the same year, the Trotskyists decided to go into the SFIO)
Poland	1	(Opponents of the French turn)
Russia	3	(Radok, Preobrazhensky, Rakovsky)
Spain	2	(Lacroix, Nin)
Czechoslovakia	1	(Friedmann)
USA	1	(Field)

The worst part of it is what Trotsky himself had to admit as to a great part of these crises: "The former life of the League, almost from its very foundation, represented a series of crises which did not rise once to the level of principle, but which rather were distinguished by extreme bitterness which poisoned the atmosphere of the organization and repelled serious workers".

After almost every departure from him, Trotsky discovered far-reaching deficiencies in the departed, who had up to that time, been highly esteemed by him: when Landau went in January, 1931, he was plastered with the worst epithets in a long document, while in the spring of 1930, Trotsky had showered overwhelming praise on the same Landau; when Well, the leader of the German LO, recognized by Trotsky, left, he declared him, in an article in the "Permanent Revolution", to be a "fly-by-night intellectual", and a "Jewish (!) petty-bourgeois"; when Bauer, to whom Trotsky had confided the function of permanent International Secretary, as well as the German organization, went away, he became a "hysterical sectarian"! But the hysterical sectarians, the fly-by-night intellectuals, the thickheads, etc. had only just been the leaders of the "vanguard of the vanguard"!

That it is not a question of processes on the periphery is shown by the names as well as the fact that almost regularly, each time the permanent secretary of the International Secretariat, nominally the highest functionary of the international Trotskyists, after one year's activity, is outside of their ranks (Rosmer, Mill, Well, Vitto, Bauer). It is absolutely marvelous, the courage with which, in view of such facts, the pamphleteer dares to state that "the Bolshevik-Leninists are the only organization who have gone through a planned development in recent years".

Frankly, we don't like the plan.

What about the statement that the Trotskyists have also gained numerically? It is true the proof is often given by means of data about the Russian section, which in truth, organizationally, does not exist, and about the forty branches of the German section, which allegedly includes hundreds of members. We do not want to spend time on these imaginative data. But how are the objective figures? Let us compare the figures of the report which the IS prepared in Spring 1934, with an estimate as of 1935 based on thorough knowledge of the facts:

MEMBERSHIP OF THE ICL

	<u>1934</u>	<u>1935</u>
Germany	1000	200
Holland	1000	at present outside ICL
France	160	250
Belgium	100	40
Spain	80	10
Greece	200?	100
Poland	200	80
Bulgaria	120	120
England	60	40
Switzerland	20	40
Italy	15	1
USA	250	at present outside ICL
Canada	100	100
Argentina	60	30
Brazil	40	40
Chile	1000	1000
Cuba	500	500
Mexico	40	30

The membership has therefore declined compared with 1934. The decline is still greater compared with 1932-1933. Then there was a section in Greece with over 2000 members. There was also a strong section in South Africa.

The reasons for this unhealthy development are to be sought, along with the mistaken Trotskyite policies, above all, in the internal organizational methods. On paper, the Trotskyites stand for full internal democracy. But in reality, it is the "chief" who decides everything. They do not try to deny the overwhelming influence of this one person, but they explain this fact by the natural superiority of Trotsky, which is supposed to get its way without any mechanical or bureaucratic means. But that is not quite so: apart from the fact that even money questions are not without importance in certain sections, the fact is that the whole organization is essentially held together by the cult of the personality of Trotsky. It is therefore no wonder that this organization numbers very few shopworkers as permanent members among its ranks, and is composed above all of young intellectuals and other young people without experience in the class struggle. This condition is felt to be quite normal and was expressly welcomed in the following words: "we have far too many older comrades who have already gone through many experiences and disappointments. That is very good, but it is also bad. We must try to replace them by very young workers, by boys from 16 to 20 years". So Trotsky wrote in March, 1934.

In order to complete the picture, let us add a few examples of mechanical intervention into the "democratic decisions", which they would like to get rid of as "gossip" because they are very inconvenient, but which lose none of their force as evidence thereby.

1) When political differences of opinion arise, the legal leaderships, insofar as they are in the majority against the Chief, are robbed of their papers ("Verite" and "Unser Wort" 1934) while opposition documents are prevented from reaching the organization.

2) This "model" organization, in the five years of its existence, has never had a regular international conference attended by elected delegates. Such a conference is always refused by the leadership as unnecessary. The leading body consists of a group composed of the delegates of seven sections, which however, only meets to sanction orders of the Chief which have already been executed. As to the method of voting, it is characteristic that the representative of the Italian section consisting of one member has one vote just like the representative of a large section, because and so long as, he is for the "line".

3) The leadership, the IS, is in general not elected but appointed. Out of six secretaries, only two were elected (the first and the third), only one (the third) died a natural death. In the present IS, one person is a main collaborator and theoretician who came in by the wish of the Chief, although the acceptance of the person in question has been refused by his own section for the past year. (The person in question, like Ruth Fischer, who likewise came into the international leadership "by desire from above" had already tested his destructive talents in the German labor movement).

It is not surprising that in this way, with the lack of any serious democratic control and the absence of tested, experienced and deep-rooted cadres, adventuristic elements can arrive at leading roles in the organization. All that they have to do is to pay tribute to the fetish of the moment, e.g., at the present moment, the 4th International. Instead of spreading lies about the SAP and its relations to Spark, Zyromski, Miles etc., the pamphleteer would have done better to think over such flowers of his organization like Mill, London, Lacroix, and above all, Maria Reese. The latter case is particularly typical. Only because this woman, who is devoid of any knowledge and of any political level, declared herself in a pitiful document for Trotsky and against the Comintern bureaucracy, Trotsky demanded that this letter must be "translated into all languages" (literally, in "Unser Wort") and accepted this woman, who in the meantime has gone over to Hitler, into the "vanguard of the vanguard". And the same LT accuses the SAP of having compromised the idea of the new International by signing joint resolutions with the NIF.

This organizational system has led to a political and theoretical sterility among the entire following of the Chief, and on the other hand, to an unlimited over-estimation of themselves. They assume that even every long-known Communist principle was "picked up" from them, and that every political step was determined by their criticism or, as the case may be, made because of the mass pressure which they produced. This regime inevitably results in disintegration, and has as a result that all the successes of the Trotskyists, which at times have been considerable, again dissolve into nothingness. The homogeneity of this regime, according to the opinion of an expert, is expressed by the fact that they are all beaten with the same stick.

ETILOQUE

The origin of the foregoing pages by no means lies in any feelings of factional bitterness and desire to be proved right at all costs. They arose because a discussion with the quarrelsome sectarianism of Trotsky has become an unavoidable necessity.

We do not believe that we ourselves are in possession of complete and final truth. We know our own deficiencies too. We not only recognize fruitful and positive criticism, but we actually welcome it.

As far as Trotsky personally is concerned, our feelings have always been only those of respect and comradeship, even when we differed with him in the estimation of individual questions, and although we could bring but little confidence to quite a number of his followers.

After the victory of Hitler, when the Trotskyites declared themselves for a new party in Germany and a New International, and expressed some self-criticism of their own past, we considered it possible that the Trotskyites might overcome their faults which were well-known to us, and that after a process of clarification, an organic merger could be carried out. In spite of many warnings on the part of many who had already had their experiences with the Trotskyists, we made a serious and honest attempt in this direction. The attempt has failed thoroughly, and as we believe, once and for all. The same bitter experiences which many others have made before us, have not been spared to us, although, thanks to the caution which we have exercised, fortunately without the SAP suffering thereby.

It goes without saying that we are always prepared to stand shoulder to shoulder with the Trotskyists in the struggle for individual concrete tasks, but we must refuse not only any merger, but also any other kind of organizational connection with them. We consider ourselves bound to warn all sincere revolutionists and all revolutionary organizations which are looking for a way out, against the destructive talents of Trotskyism, in the interests of the rebirth of the proletarian movement.

SUPPLEMENT

Draft of an appeal of the SAP to the International Bureau for Revolutionary Socialist Unity, handed in on May 2, 1935.

"TO THE REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES!"

"WORKERS, COMRADES! The Soviet Union has concluded a military alliance with capitalist France. In this connection a communique was agreed upon in Moscow between the Soviet Government and the French Foreign Minister, Laval, which says:

'In consideration of this, Stalin understands and approves the policies of national defence carried out by France, which aim to bring its armed force into accord with its security'.

"This policy of the Soviet Government, and the declaration of Stalin, the actual leader of the Comintern, compels the revolutionary working class of the whole world to think seriously. We, as independent revolutionists, conscious of our responsibilities, have to state with regard to these two facts the following:

"The Soviet Union finds itself in a very serious situation. It is threatened on two sides by imperialist states, by Japan and by Hitler - Germany and their event-

ual allies. In those countries and in the most important of the others there are at the present time (not least through the fault of many years of Comintern policies) no strong Communist parties which would be the natural allies of the Soviet Union. The country of socialist construction needs and wants peace. Thus the Soviet Union is compelled to conclude an alliance with capitalist states.

"Insofar as this alliance diminishes the acute danger of war and utilizes the contradictions among capitalist states, we would have to approve it. But the declaration of Stalin goes far beyond that. The revolutionary working class cannot and must not follow Stalin when he expressly approves the armament of a bourgeois government. This declaration strengthens the position of the bourgeoisie of France and of all other States. It is joyfully quoted by the reactionary press of the entire world, not least by that of Hitler Germany, and is well exploited by them. It confuses and demoralizes the sections of the Comintern and beyond them the ranks of the revolutionary workers, and weakens most seriously the fighting power of the Communists.

"But who guarantees to Stalin that the weapons which today being forged by capitalist France with his blessing will not turn against Socialism tomorrow, when it comes to a life and death struggle between capitalism and socialism, whether against the French proletariat or against the Soviet Union? No one can give such a guarantee. That is why it is intolerable that the leader of the Comintern should expressly approve these armaments and thereby call upon the Communists of France (and correspondingly the Communists of other countries allied with the Soviet Union) to quit their determined struggle against this capitalist armament. In this way the struggle against the capitalist class State and against the bourgeois governments is naturally seriously crippled. Thereby the forces of all those are weakened who alone could be the real protectors of a permanent peace and of the Soviet Union.

"This must show to broad masses what a disaster it is when the revolutionary labor movement of the entire world is thus bound to the opportunist necessities of Soviet Russian foreign policy. Now the French CP is to be sacrificed just as yesterday the CP of Germany was sacrificed. Already we have a statement from the CP of Czecho-Slovakia that it is no longer opposed in principle to the armament of the CS republic. Other sections will follow, as soon as the government of the countries concerned have concluded treaties with the Soviet Union. This is not only a blow against the interests of the world proletariat, but also contradicts the interests of the Soviet Union itself, if well understood. Only independent Communist parties, united in an independent Communist International can lead the world proletariat to victory and at the same time be the only reliable allies of the Soviet Union.

"For the revolutionary working class, for every phase of its policy, it is of decisive importance to recognize that the highest security for the Soviet Union consists of the revolutionary capture of power in the capitalist countries. Therefore - undiminished struggle against one's "own bourgeoisie", therefore no support of the armament policies of capitalist governments, even among the powers that are allied with Russia. For this armament for war is at the same time strengthening the power of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. Therefore there must be no policy of civil peace. Our whole activity now and in time of war must be decided by the will to conquer political power. Any other policy would mean the enormous strengthening of the capitalist dictatorship and a corresponding danger for Soviet Russia.

"Equally fatal is the policy of coalitions and civil peace which will surely be carried on by all parties of the 2nd International on nationalist grounds and after the outbreak of war.

"There are thousands in all countries who recognize the enormous danger of this development and want to oppose it effectively. But they are isolated from each other and their forces are scattered, while in this international question they must proceed internationally.

"It is the highest time that in all countries and internationally those elements should join together who want powerful independent revolutionary parties, who are opposed to any policy of civil peace, but are at the same time the most loyal allies of the Soviet Union. A now 'Zimmerwald' must bring these forces together and join them into one before it is too late, before a new world conflagration has partly led a disorientated labor movement into the camp of the bourgeoisie, partly smashed it into atoms

"Our call goes out to all who recognize the situation and the urgent tasks of the day. Get into contact with each other and with us, unite your efforts to save and regenerate the revolutionary labor movement!

"LONG LIVE THE INDEPENDENT REVOLUTIONARY LABOR MOVEMENT !

"LONG LIVE THE SOVIET UNION ! DOWN WITH ITS ENEMIES WHO ARE ALSO OUR ENEMIES!

"LONG LIVE THE REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE! LONG LIVE THE REVOLUTIONARY VICTORY OF THE WORLD WORKING CLASS OVER FASCISTS AND CAPITALISTS !"

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